

October 17, 1961

On Tuesday, October 17, I spent an hour with Ambassador David Bruce. Although he made no restrictions on what he told me, I think it would be better to use this for background rather than for direct attribution.

East-West negotiations: Bruce does not think the dispute with France serious. Actually, de Gaulle probably is right in believing that if the West stuck together and declined to negotiate until Khrushchev were reasonable, the whole thing would go better. But democratic countries have difficulty doing this. Bruce's own feeling is that there must be negotiations, if for no other reason than to keep public opinion in support of Western governments. But he would go into the meetings with no fixed positions, in the sense that he believes ~~it~~ it time for the Russians to be putting forth some proposals. In addition, there's always the problem of leakage of Western positions -- fall-back positions as well as the original bargaining points. In this Bruce's feelings are very close to those of the British. The problem was particularly bad, he says, at the 1959 Geneva conference. Incidentally, he believes the West went altogether too far in suggesting that it would control "propaganda activities" in Berlin. This would be altogether one-sided with no control over Soviet subversion in East Berlin, which he says is very substantial.

Inspection zone-denuclearized zone: Bruce throws down hard the Ormsby-Gore idea of a ground inspection zone. Off the record, he says he has talked with Lord Home about it and that ~~that~~ Home will have no part of it. Home thinks it very dangerous except as part of a larger disarmament plan. The basic difficulty is still that it would appear to discriminate against Germany, and would play into German feelings of self-pity. Bruce thinks that Ormsby-Gore simply has not been briefed on the subject and has been too close to the disarmament negotiations (I am not sure that this is true, because the plan comes from elsewhere in the Foreign Office also).

*Essentially what Ormsby-Gore is proposing is similar to the Norstad plan suggested several years ago, and all of these plans variants of the Rapacki plan. There might be some point to them later, but as a beginning offer they would be perilous because the Russians would seize upon them to obfuscate other issues. The Russian objective still remains to detach Germany. Bruce thinks that there is substantial danger that the Germans would feel badly let down if any inspection or security arrangements seemed to make them second-class citizens.

At the same time, Bruce thinks that Adenauer, while he is a great European and has been right about Germany's links with the West, has been "pig-headed" about Berlin.

Status of Berlin: Bruce sees substantial danger that even under the best of circumstances West Berlin will become a hollow shell, with people and capital fleeing from the city. Already there has been some indication

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of this in the concern of foreign industries for their plants in Berlin. West Germany is subsidizing Berlin to the tune of half a billion dollars a year, and this is exclusive of what industries themselves are doing to locate plants in Berlin. If this bill became as high as one and a half billion dollars a year, Bruce feels that there would be a substantial movement in Germany simply to ~~scuttle~~ scuttle Berlin as not worth the cost.

Accordingly, Bruce is very much in favor of some sort of United Nations solution as mentioned by Walter ~~Lippmann~~ ^{Lippmann}. He believes that the best way would be to locate the U.N. headquarters in Berlin and make Berlin a world capital. By doing this it would be possible to demand that all of Berlin, rather than merely ~~the~~ East Berlin, be included in the area. Bruce also would demand land corridors under international control to West Germany. He thinks that the focus of international attention on Berlin would be a sufficient guarantee and probably would succeed in holding the population in Berlin. He agrees that the cost would be quite great, but he believes that the headquarters in New York could be sold for a good price. The U.S. probably would have to pick up much of the bill, but it would not be much more expensive than a year of Congo operations.

Bruce thinks that the West suffered a grievous loss in the closing of the East Berlin border, and that the failure to do more than wring our hands contributed to the loss of morale in West Berlin. Bruce himself would have taken action, presumably in knocking down the barriers.

British nuclear deterrent: Despite the U.S. effort to build up conventional forces in Europe (which Bruce does not think a real addition to the deterrent because it is nuclear war that frightens the Russians), Britain has done almost nothing along this line. In point of fact, the recent exercises of the British Army on the Rhine (widely discussed in the Times and Guardian the last few days) indicate that the British are in fact preparing to fight a nuclear war in Europe. The army forces are ~~as~~ sadly under strength, and they simply do not have the capability to mount anything but a nuclear response.

All of this stems from the "new look" period some years ago when the British took up the American line that it was somehow possible to get a bigger bang ~~bang~~ for a pound and defense could be had cheaply. Bruce thinks that Sandys was a major culprit. The blunt fact is that conscription is going to have to be reintroduced here shortly, and Britain is going to have to pay a substantially larger defense bill (Ian MacIsaac mentioned to me the other day the possibility that Britain would reintroduce conscription). Actually, none of the NATO partners has done very much toward building up conventional forces, although there have been a few pro-forma moves. Although Bruce disagrees with the idea of more

conventional forces, he says that if the theory that such forces would be more credible to the Russians (on the basis that we might use them to respond, whereas there might be some doubt whether we would actually use nuclear weapons in a small fracas) is to be effective, certainly there will have to be more evidence of cooperation.

Laos: Harriman has done extremely well in the negotiations at Geneva. His greatest problem has been not the Russians, but the Indians. Krishna Menon's proteges have obstructed an agreement at every point, and according to Bruce have been much worse than the Russians to deal with. Bruce thinks Menon totally impossible at every point. He blames Menon in particular for talking Nehru out of a strong stand both on nuclear tests and on Hungary five years ago.

In a related area Bruce told of a luncheon today with the Vietnamese Ambassador. It was a monologue of a professorial sort, with the Vietnamese opining that what Vietnam really needed was to mount a religious crusade and to enlist the services of Moral Rearmament. Bruce winced, but the Ambassador really meant Moral Rearmament.

Congo: Bruce confirmed that Britain had not permitted two Ethiopian jet fighters requested for the U.N. Congo operation to refuel, although he does not have this officially. There had been no explanation here of this mystery. British opinion changed very quickly in the Congo affair. It had been quite broadly pro-U.N. all during the year. There was no sympathy with the Belgian mercenaries or with those few British citizens serving Tshombe. In fact, the passports of the latter were quickly taken up. But when the U.N. forces abetted the holding of Tshombe as a prisoner, public opinion quickly switched. This seemed quite unfair. In addition, there is an admiration here for stability wherever it is found, and Tshombe seems to represent most of the stability in the Congo. Bruce added that he thought a great deal of the difficulty in the Congo over the last year had been caused by the Indians. He had no good word for Dayal, although he believes his trouble primarily one of intellectual snobbery and race prejudice.

Bruce has, rather admired Salazar in the past, but concedes that it is difficult for any dictatorship to remain benevolent. Salazar was ~~was~~ one of the few philosophers who really did not want power. But now the problem has gone much beyond Portugal. In this vein, he spoke with some admiration of what had been done in the Dominican republic to promote economic development even though the wealth went to Trujillo. He believes it important for the United States now to recognise the ~~Salazar~~ ^{Batista} government in Ciudad Trujillo so as to get the Trujillo heirs out of the running.

British neutralism: Bruce does not think the various ban-the-bomb and neutralist campaigns here much of a threat. British opinion is solidly against nuclear war as such, but opinion anywhere probably would be the same if the question were asked baldly. The anti-war movements are much